

FAQ

SNSF Information event for the Ambizione call for proposals : 16.08.2024

Eligibility

Question: Hello, can research assistants be employed instead of PhDs within the project?

Answer: Yes, it is possible to hire other personnel than PhD students via an Ambizione Grant

Question: Are candidates considered eligible if they have completed their PhD and postdoctoral work outside the Swiss university system and have never been part of the Swiss academic system before?

Answer: Yes, if they fulfil all other participation requirements, they are eligible. There is no requirements in terms of nationality or residence permit.

Question: Does the fact that SNF receive very few application for 'Ambizione research project only (no salary') increases the success chance for this 2nd option? Are the 2 options evaluated separately?

Answer: No, they are evaluated together with the other Ambizione proposals and are treated the same way.

Question: Can the Spark grant overlap with the Ambizione grant? Or should I let the Ambizione grant start after the enddate of the Spark?

Answer: Yes, it is possible that a Spark grant overlaps with an Ambizione funding period.

Question: After having submitted an Ambizione application, is it correct that you can not apply to SNF project funding nor NCCR scheme as a PI? For how long are you prevented to do so?

Answer: Yes, indeed. If you have submitted an Ambizione proposal, you cannot apply for the same duration of support for an SNSF project funding or NCCR in the role of an applicant or further applicant. This is only possible again for a funding duration, which would start after the end of your Ambizione grant.

CV

Question: Can major output be justified by something else than publications, eg. grants, conferences organisation, invited talks, what is acceptable?

Answer: Yes you can opt to put whatever you like as major scientific achievement as long as you follow the formal regulations (like max. number of citation, etc).

Collaboration

Question: Can we have collaborations with other institutions ? For example, can we say that some data will be provided from another center with which we collaborate?

Answer: Yes, that is possible.

Research plan

Question: About the research plan, can we use figures/diagrams in the research plan? Like showing the work packages and experimental plan details? This's not clarified in the guideline. The figures will be counted into the 15 page limit? but will not be counted into 60000 characters, is this right? Thanks.

Answer: Yes, you can include as many figures / diagrams / tables as you wish, as long as your research plan is not longer than 15 pages and does not include more than 60'000 characters.

Salary

Question: For the project grant, can the salary also be covered by university funding?

Answer: Yes, this is possible. Important is that your position/salary is covered for the whole duration of the potential Ambizione grant.

Question: In the Ambizione regulations it is mentioned that "The average gross salary will be around CHF 120'000 per annum". However, after having asked to 4-5 different universities in Switzerland only one really approaches that average salary. Where is this 120k figure coming from? Do universities need to comply with it to some extent? Thanks.

Answer: This is an approximate figure we suggest in view of our experience, but not all universities pay the same salaries. In case you are invited for phase 2 of the evaluation, we will verify your actual salary with the planned research institution based on your experience and their salary brackets for Ambizione grantees.

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Answer: It is expected that the research institution contributes a commensurate share of the funding of research expenses (e.g. material, equipment, personnel, travel, etc.) and access rights to infrastructures, equipment, and other services as necessary for conducting the research, but there is no specific prescription on how this has to be done. This is an approximate figure we suggest in view of our experience, but not all universities pay the same salaries. In case you are invited for phase 2 of the evaluation, we will verify your actual salary with the planned research institution based on your experience and their salary brackets for Ambizione grantees.

Budget

Question: Can you add a General Abonnement (GA) to the budget if you intend to carry out research in different parts of Switzerland and cannot specify all the travels you will have to take?

Answer: In principle this is not possible.

Question: Must the planned publications during the Ambizione Project be open access? Should the publication costs be part of the planned budget?

Answer: Yes, this is a requirement for SNSF funded projects. The publication costs can however not be applied for via the Ambizione budget itself, but can be requested later on during the ongoing grant via a separate funding possibility. cf. Home EN - Open Access (snf.ch)

Hosting institution fund

Question: Is it true that the hosting institution must fund 20% of the expenses? Is it possible for the host institution not to contribute with any funding?

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Evaluation

Question: Are people rated higher in the evaluation process if they request to supervise PhD candidate and rated lower if they decide not to?

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Question: Is it possible for two researchers in the same department of an institute to get the Ambizione grant during the same application period? Or does SNF only give one grant to a department in any given year?

Answer: If both proposals are evaluated positively, it is possible. There are no restrictions in terms of how many ambizione grants can be submitted per host institution.

Question: If you have already submitted your proposal once (say 2024), do you have to resubmit in the very next year if it's rejected or can you apply in 2 years (e.g. in 2026)

Answer: You can resubmit in whichever year you like, as long as you still fulfill all eligibility criteria. Also as a reminder, it is only possible to apply two times to Ambizione

Question: Is it a problem if an applicant also has aspirations for a non-academic career after the Ambizione? Will this be seen in a negative way?

Answer: Yes that is possible. The aim after the grant is that applicants will be ready for a related extra-academic or academic career.

Resubmission

Question: If a proposal is rejected after the first step, does it have to be resubmitted exclusively to the next call, or can it be resubmitted again afterwards?

Answer: You can resubmit in whichever year you like, as long as you still fulfill all eligibility criteria. Also as a reminder, it is only possible to apply two times to Ambizione.

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